[89 cont.]
000 abundant flying and, especially, marine fauna.

For a modern technology, their region has great resources,
511 but for the culture of the Seri it is frankly inhospitable. The standard of living is exceedingly low, as is proclaimed by natives and foreigners and as is demonstrated by the illnesses and hunger that weaken the population.

[90] The Seri truly form part of our Western society, in
226 so far as they catch fish, with fishhooks and motorboats, to sell
439 in the markets of Hermosillo, Nogales, and Tucson, and they
[177] obtain payments in national specie and coin. The part that
182 they form, however, has its own internal structure, which regulates the relations with the environment and among its mem-
[161] bers, even though a group of 218 persons, which suffers severe alterations in percentages from disasters like the sinking of a boat or strokes of good luck like the establishment of a prosperous fishing camp, is almost insignificant for the nation.

Most probably they have never been much more numerous, and they must not have had great cohesion in the past, a situation explicable in view of their nomadic gathering economy.
621 Toward the close of the 18th century they were divided into bands, of which it is known that the most important were the Guaymas, Upanguaymas, Tepocas, Tiburones, and Salineros.
[648] They banded together at various times in order to defend themselves and to attack the nuclei of Mexicans of the zone, achieving combined action, but without effective political unity.

619 At present they seem to form a single group without marked subdivisions, although they recognize affiliations like that of "Tiburones," "half-Papago," etc., which appear to have little real classificatory significance.

● 184 There is great uniformity: they speak a single language
619 incomprehensible to the rest of humanity; they have a relatively uniform culture, and there is tribal unification for matters involving sexual exchange.

The most obvious relations are spatial; they have important
361 settlements that sprung up around the fishing establishments and are more or less permanently occupied. Of these, "El Desemboque," close to the mouth of a river from which they have been displaced, is the most important, with 80 per cent of the Seri

8: Ascher E-5 (1960) 1962 NU31 Seri NU31

411 gasket is not available. If a Seri needs a foreshaft for immediate
461 use he can dispense with the gasket, but all the other materials are necessary to make the tool functional. As a result, a Seri may have one or several foreshafts in the same or in different stages of manufacture (see Plate II),[2] and he may also have a number of shaped or unshaped points or pieces of metal but few finished foreshafts.

411 If an archeologist were to excavate the remains of contemporary Seri culture at some time in the future his observational field would be limited to the results of behavior. Under ideal conditions, the data available to him for reconstructing the turtle fishing complex might include foreshafts, the materials from which and implements with which they were manufactured, and turtle carapaces.

411 All 21 finished foreshafts (Plate I),[1] exhibit an obvious general
184 similarity despite the fact that they range in age from one to eight years. Twenty of them have a single barbed point. Plate II,[2] illustrates the general shape of the hafting, the place where the hafting has been split, a mesquite gum sealing, and a refinished hafting base—a combination of features that is exhibited in all 21 foreshafts. The manner in which the lead cord is interwoven with the extension cord is similar in all foreshafts except those in which either cord has been repaired. In nineteen cases (excluding one very long and one very short point), the length of the point beyond the hafting ranges from 4.4 to 6.1 cm. With three exceptions (one long and two short) the length of the hafting ranges from 5.8 to 7.8 cm. In all but two examples the hafting is longer than the point. The difference in length between the hafting and the point above the hafting varies within a range of 0.1 to 3 cm. Thus, with the exceptions noted, the maximal variation with respect to these measurements is small—1.7 cm. for the length of the point above the hafting, 2 cm. for the length of the hafting, and 3 cm. for the difference in length between the hafting and the point above the hafting (see Table 1).[3]

Examination of the three available sets of foreshafts produced by single individuals reveals a smaller range of variation within each set than within the entire collection. In four foreshafts of Juan Moreno the length of the point above the hafting ranges from 4.9 to 5.2 cm., and the length of the hafting from 6.1 to 6.7 cm. The sets produced by Francisco Barnett (see Plate II),[2] and by Miguel Barnett show a comparable restriction in the range of variation. A comparison of the three sets, however, shows that their measurements are similar enough to each other to provide little basis for distinction. The range in length of the haftings of Juan Moreno (6.1 to 6.7 cm.), for example, overlaps that of the haftings made by Francisco Barnett (6.4 to 7.7 cm.).

Variety in the 21 finished products taken as a group, other than that due to differential age and use, is most evident in one particular respect: eight of them lack a gasket. Each owner of foreshafts without gaskets was asked to explain this absence. Two could not or would not give an explanation; five replied that rubber was not available; and one man, Ignacio Molina, stated that he omitted a gasket be-

[1] [Facing p. 364] [2] [facing p. 365] [3] [page 367]

8: Ascher E-5 (1960) 1962 NU31 Seri NU31

TABLE 1
Foreshaft Specifications

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Manufacturer	Plate Reference	Approx. Age of Artifact	Length of Hafting (Centimeters)	Length of Point (Centimeters)
Ernesto Dias	Ia	2	6.5	5.3
José Estorga	Ib	6	6.5	5.6
Francisco Garcia	Ic	4	6.5	5.8
Alberto Mendes	Id	5	5.8	5.7
Ignacio Molina	Ie	3	8.7	11.5
Louis Moreno	If	3	7.8	4.8
Ramon Perrales	Ig	3	7.0	4.4
Francisco Barnett	IIa	1	6.8	5.2
	IIb	2	6.4	5.3
	IIc	2	6.8	5.9
	IId	2	7.3	6.1
	IIe	–	7.7	5.8
Miguel Barnett		3	7.8	5.0
		3	6.0	4.9
		5	6.1	4.5
Ernesto Corrales		1	3.1	2.8
(8-year old boy)		1	3.0	4.2
Juan Moreno		7	6.5	5.0
		7	6.7	4.9
		8	6.7	5.2
		7	6.1	5.1

cause he did not believe it would help retard death. This man, interestingly enough, is the nephew of Alberto Molina, whom the Seri believe responsible for having introduced the gasket. The foreshaft produced by Ignacio (Plate Ie) is the most divergent one in the entire collection. It is, for example, the only one in which the point has two barbs and, except for those made by the eight-year-old boy, the only one in which the length of the point above the hafting exceeds that of the hafting. The finished products also show some variation in the source of the rubber used for the gasket and in the kind of wood used for the hafting. Six of the eight gaskets are shaped from an automobile tire, two from scraps of rubber of which the men did not recall the source. Three haftings (Plate Ia, d, g) are made of ironwood, all the others of mesquite, which is easier to obtain than suitable ironwood or nonindigenous woods.

[196]

Discussion

The foregoing example is designed as a paradigm to illustrate how observations on ongoing cultures might be adapted to the problems of archeological reconstruction. It is, of course, imperative to focus on behavior where matter is changed in some way, because it is only in altered matter that behavior is protracted through time. The example is deliberately selected to capitalize on an important area

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462 desert plants or littoral fishlets from tide-pools or of the shellfish. Both men and women will [224] bring in an occasional rattler, although women [857] are more likely to do this because they spend more [883] time in the desert. Children of both sexes are engaged in the female occupations here, but adolescent boys already join in their fathers' hunts on land or sea.

342 Housing has undergone some changes. In the desert or on Tiburon the Indians construct the 184 kind of shelter they did in the recorded past, an ocotillo frame, bent over in the middle and covered up with dried plant debris and twigs from the desert, or with the sail cloth. But in Desemboque they have more substantial houses—of wattle and adobe, with flat roofs, rectangular or square, often with corrugated tin or drift planks and other debris piled up on top, or along the walls.

178 In the remainder of their material culture, not much has been left from years past although one must remember that from the very beginning of recorded Serian history it has been of a most [291] meager sort. Pelican robes, which some Seris ap- [412] parently still wore in 1930 are gone for good. So are the stone tools. So is the pottery which had [323] probably disappeared in Kroeber's time. The hu- [301] man hair necklace with rattlesnake rattles is also a thing of the past. The rattlesnake skin belts [291] McGee (1898:170) described and figured are probably all gone. I havn't seen or heard of any.

412 But what remains much as they had been in 285 1894 are the bone-awls. These are made of burros' carpals and the blossoming of basketry, owing to

[P. 8A]